“Blessings for the Family Dinner Table in the children’s name we say”

Family enrolment in risk communication: a local tryout in the Azorean islands.

THE PROBLEM

Overweight and obesity prevalence in adolescents aged 10-14 years old

Around 150 million children in school age suffer from overweight, from which 45 million ones are obese (IOTF).
Overweight & obesity prevalence in children aged 7-11 years old

- Around 20% of European children are overweight and one third of them are obese.

- Portugal, Spain, Italy, Malta, Sicilia, Gibraltar and Creta present a prevalence index of 30% on children’s obesity and overweight.

“EU Platform on diet, physical activity and health-briefing paper“ (IOTF, 2005)
THE PROBLEM:

OVERWEIGHT & OBESITY AMONG CHILDREN – IN PORTUGAL VS AZORES

Child obesity is a greater problem in the Azores than it is in Portugal and other European Countries (Rita Carvalho, 2009)
THE PROBLEM

CHILDREN FOOD HABITS IN AZORES

Contrast between average recommended daily values and the actual ones consumed by azoreans in 1998 (per day)

N= 1380

Porto et a, 1998

ENERGY

The mortality due to circulatory diseases in the Azores is scarier than in the mainland.
THE SOCIAL RESPONSE

GOVERNMENTS’ REGIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST OBESITY (2009)

RISK ASSESSMENT:

PERIODICAL MONITORING ON:
- OBESITY’S PREVELANCE
- FOOD HABITS AND PATERNS

MEDICAL CARE ON OBESITY:
- MEDICAL CONSULTATION,
- MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

PREVENTIVE MEDICAL CARE
- PROFESSIONAL TRAINING ON HEALTHY FOOD HABITS AND EXERCISE FOR FAMILY DOCTORS, NURSES AND ASSISTENTS
THE SOCIAL RESPONSE

GOVERNMENTS’ REGIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST OBESITY (2009)

RISK MANAGEMENT:

REGULAMENTATION OF THE FOOD AVAILABLE AT THE SCHOOLS’ CANTEENS, BARS AND OTHER PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS
MAIN PRINCIPLES OF INTERVENTION

SOCIAL CONTEXT
Relevance of the cultural identity
VALUES, TRADITIONS AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND
That help to configure the Social identity of the Family.

MATERIAL CULTURE
Artifacts crystallize meanings

TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION PROCESS
To hear the ‘other’
CO-AUTHORSHIP – ‘Participatory’ research to study the meanings of actual food habits, thoughts and practices among families. To design a communicational device in order to promote a common space and time to reflexive practice.
SOCIAL CONTEXT

THE HOLLY SPIRIT CEREMONIES

Meal liturgy

Giving grace to the lord by sharing a sacred meal
MATERIAL CULTURE
**WHO?** Voluntary Azorean families, with more than one child (non obese), from economically disadvantaged background. (see literature)

**WHAT?** The social dynamics behind the construction of the families’ ‘food identity’.
- How is that identity negotiated?
- Till what extent do the elements engage in their food choices?
- How are the social roles defined? gender? age? parenthood?

**HOW?** Through qualitative, participatory research using an anthropological principles of approach, ethnographic methods of observation, interaction and data collection.
THE TABLECLOTH

A CATALYST FOR REFLECTION

The researcher will propose a challenge to the families: the making of a tablecloth a material testimony of their own reflection.